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SB 341 Testimony before the House Judiciary Committee provided on behalf of Alternatives, Inc. by Pat Keim

I am here today representing Alternatives, Inc. We are a not for profit operator of the men's and women's pre-release centers in Billings. We contract with the Department of Corrections and Yellowstone and Stillwater Counties. We do handle pretrial clients referred to us by the county and the courts. We provide an alternative to pretrial incarceration. In so doing we save the county considerable expense.

In 2008 our prerelease centers handled 287 pretrial clients. The average stay in the program was 30 days for a total of 8,610 days of supervision. This represented 8.2% of the 3,490 total clients referred to us in all of our programs in 2008.

In 2008 the county paid Alternatives, Inc. a total of \$102,000. 8.2% of that amount equals \$8,364 which represents the portion paid by the county for pretrial clients. Thus the county paid about \$29.00 per pretrial client which averaged out to about \$.97 per referral per day. Additionally, the 287 clients themselves paid a total of \$11,884, which works out to \$1.38 per day per person average. You may hear some testimony that these charges may be hard for some people to pay but they are really quite small. The total revenue per client day was \$2.35. These charges do not include extra costs for additional services such as GPS, electronic, or Scram monitoring for which the client must pay which may be mandated by the courts in isolated cases. These charges range from \$9 to \$15/day.

With regard to program cost/savings to the county one must consider the county cost per inmate day at the jail of \$58.40. Had these 287 people been housed at the jail for the full 8,610 days the cost would have been \$499,724 vs. the \$8,364 the county paid. Alternatives, Inc.

It is important to us that there be a mechanism to recapture costs for providing this essential service. Senate Bill 341 provides that recovery capability at a very low cost per referral.